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WHAT THE RURAL MINISTER CAN DO TO HELP THE PROGRAM OF
THE FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

The purpose of the Farm Security Administration is to help low-income farmers, by credit combined with education and technical farming advice, to re-establish themselves and become permanently self-supporting. Rural ministers who are interested in advancing the FSA program may help by the following specific steps:

1. Become acquainted with the Farm Security supervisor and the Farm Security program in his own county.
 - (a) This will enable the minister to pass on to needy farm families of his community information about the kinds of help they can get from FSA--rehabilitation loans and advice on farming and homemaking practices, loans to buy farms in some instances, debt adjustment, long-term leases, health and sanitation aids, etc.
2. Encourage groups of neighbors to meet together regularly to study over their mutual problems and how to solve these problems together.
 - (a) One FSA "neighborhood study group" decided that rats were the chief problem of their community; they sponsored a successful campaign to kill the rodents. Other groups have found that all the members need certain items of farm equipment which none can afford individually, such as a tractor, or a thresher; sometimes these groups have bought the needed equipment cooperatively. Having the confidence of the people, the minister better than any other person, can take the leadership in encouraging study groups.
 - (b) The neighborhood groups also can provide a social outlet for isolated people, and a means of integrating low-income families into community life. Through their groups they can escape their spiritual isolation.
3. Help form small farmers' co-ops.
 - (a) These co-ops should originate in the study groups, where the people first discover their mutual needs, then arrive at a way of working together to meet those needs.
 - (b) The minister should help the group learn the principles of cooperation. Not knowing the simple "rules" by which co-ops operate has been the cause of failure of many co-ops in the past and has contributed to the belief that "farmers can't stick together."
 - (c) Then the minister can tell the group of technical and financial help to co-ops available from the FSA, and at the right time can invite the FSA supervisor to meet with the group.
4. Interpret the philosophy of Farm Security to the community, by sermons, by home visits, and by inviting the Farm Security supervisor on special occasions to talk to the congregation or other groups at the church.

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